

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE SITE, LAUNCH,
REENTRY AND RECOVERY OPERATIONS AT THE KISTLER LAUNCH
FACILITY, NEVADA TEST SITE (NTS)**

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Associate Administrator for Commercial Space Transportation (AST) and the Department of Energy (DOE).

PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) the FAA is initiating a 30-day public review and comment period of the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Site, Launch, Reentry and Recovery Operations at the Kistler Launch Facility, Nevada Test Site (NTS) which will begin with the publication of a proposed environmental finding document in the Federal Register. A public meeting will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada on May 2, 2000 to record verbal comments from the public. These comments will be addressed in a Comment Response Document which will be produced by the FAA.

ABSTRACT: The Draft Environmental Assessment for the Site, Launch, Reentry and Recovery Operations at the Kistler Launch Facility, Nevada Test Site specifically addresses the environmental impacts of the proposed action of licensing commercial launch and reentry operations at the NTS. These operations would include pre-flight processing activities, launch/flight operations, as well as landing and recovery operations. In order to conduct these operations, Kistler proposes to construct a base of operations consisting of a private launch site (including a vehicle processing facility), a vehicle reentry, landing and recovery area, and a payload processing facility.

Prior to selecting the NTS as its launch base, Kistler explored alternatives throughout the United States. Kistler considered locating at the California Spaceport® at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Spaceport Florida Authority's Launch Complex at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, and the proposed Southwest Regional Spaceport near White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico.

Potential impacts of the proposed action including: safety and health, land use, air resources, noise, socioeconomics, visual resources, biological resources, water resources, geology and soils, cultural and Native American resources, and transportation were considered in the Environmental Assessment.

Cumulative impacts resulting from the proposed action specifically considered include: air emissions, reusable launch vehicle engine noise, socioeconomic factors, biological resources, and cultural and Native American resources.

CONTACT INFORMATION: Questions regarding the proposed action and the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Site, Launch, Reentry and Recovery Operations at the Kistler Launch Facility, Nevada Test Site; or any comments regarding the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed action can be addressed to Mr. Nikos Himaras, Manager, Environmental Program, Office of the Associate Administrator for Commercial Space Transportation, Space System Development Division, Suite 331/AST-100, 800 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20591; email nick.himaras@faa.gov; or phone (202) 267-7926. Any written comments regarding the Draft Environmental Assessment should be sent to the same mailing address.

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